

MAX HEINDEL'S MESSAGE

Prayer

IN ONE PLACE the Bible directs us to pray without ceasing, in another Christ repudiates the practice, saying that we should not imitate those who believe they are heard for their many words. There can, of course, be no contradiction between the words of Christ and those of his disciples, and we must therefore reconstruct our ideas of prayer in such a manner that we may pray always and yet without voluminous verbal or mental expression. Emerson said:

Although your knees were never bent,
To heaven your hourly prayers are sent.
And be they formed for good or ill,
Be they registered and answered still.

In other words, every act is a prayer, which, under the Law of Cause and Effect, brings to us adequate results. We get exactly what we want, expression in words is not necessary; but sustained action along a certain line indicates what we wish, even if we ourselves do not realize it, and in time, longer or shorter, according to the intensity of our desire, there comes that which we have thus prayed for. The things thus gained or achieved may not be what we really and consciously want; in fact, sometimes we may get something we would far sooner be without, something that is a curse and a scourge, but the prayer-act has brought them to us and we must keep them until we can legitimately get rid of them.

If we throw a stone into the air the act is not complete until the reaction has carried the stone back to the earth. In that case the effect follows the

An Address Given in the Pro-Ecclesia by Max. Heindel



Oil on canvas, Gunning King

Man with the Muck Rake

Ora et labora, work and pray, is enjoined on those who would be active participants in both the spiritual and the material worlds. The nature of one's consciousness in any activity will determine its value for him, irrespective of the activity itself. Prayer can sanctify all our deeds, however lowly they may appear to others. The subject of this painting has transferred all his energies to his menial task, oblivious of the presence of the angel who would crown him with the dignity that is his by spiritual birthright, a dignity which imbues the deeds of all who stay in touch with their heavenly Father through prayer.

cause so speedily that it is not difficult to connect the two. But if we wind the spring of an alarm clock, the power is stored up in the spring until a certain mechanism releases it. Then comes the effect, the ringing of a bell, and though we may

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have been sleeping the sleep of forgetfulness, the reaction or unwinding of the spring took place just the same. Similarly, acts which we have forgotten will some time or another produce their results regardless; and thus the prayer of action is answered.

But there is the true mystic prayer, the prayer where we meet God face to face, as Elijah met Him. Not in the tumult of the world, the wind, the earthquake or the fire, but when all is still the soundless voice speaks to us from within. But the silence which is required for this experience is not a mere silence of words. There is not even the inward pictures which usually pass before us in meditation. Nor are there thoughts, but our whole being resembles a calm crystal-clear lake. In it Deity mirrors Himself, and we experience the unity which makes communication unnecessary, either by words or in any other way, for we feel all God feels. He is nearer than hands and feet.

The Christ taught us to say "Our Father who art in Heaven," etc. That prayer is the most sublime

which can be given utterance in words, but this prayer of which I am speaking may at the moment of union give itself utterance in the one unspoken word, "Father." The devotee, when he is truly in the mood of prayer, never gets any farther. He makes no requests, for what is the use; has he not the promise, "God is my Shepherd, I shall not want?" Has he not been told "To seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all other things shall be added"? But his attitude can perhaps best be understood if we take the simile of a faithful dog looking with dumb devotion into its master's face, its whole soul pouring itself out through its eyes in love. Likewise, only, of course, with much greater intensity, does the true mystic look to the God within and pour himself or herself out in voiceless adoration. In this way we may pray without ceasing inwardly, while we work as zealous servants in the world without. For let us always remember that it is not intended that we should dream our lives away, but while we pray to God within, we must also work for God without. □

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